

Mr. Speaker, after much consideration and many discussions with farmers and workers in northeast Wisconsin, I have concluded that it makes no sense to continue opening trade pacts in this hemisphere when we have faulty trade agreements—like NAFTA and GATT—that are hurting our people back home. Before we set out on a fast track to the bargaining table to negotiate our next trade agreement, the President would do well to fix these recent agreements and level the playing field for the United States.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CONTRACTING PRACTICES

SPEECH OF

HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 1997

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the revitalization of our Nation's Capital will require the participation and commitment of both the public and private sectors. Public-private partnerships will be the anchor of any economic revitalization. This goal will be successful only if all participants are assured that this is a sincere effort, with a level playing field, and not simply an extension of the two decades of poor policy decisionmaking that helped spiral Washington, DC into its recent situation.

The Congress has no desire to run the daily affairs of the city. However, the Congress does have a unique constitutional responsibility to the District of Columbia. Without micro-managing the affairs of the city, the Congress does need to ensure that as a matter of Federal policy, it will support public-private efforts designed to assist in the Capital's revitalization; support creative, imaginative, and unique approaches; support the streamlining of the Federal and District of Columbia review and regulatory processes, where appropriate, to encourage revitalization; and exercise appropriate oversight to ensure that the District honors all of its contractual and financial commitments.

It is well understood by the Congress that the District of Columbia continues to suffer from past financial problems. For example, the District of Columbia has experienced issues with a number of its current vendors as a result of its prior reputation of poor payment performance. A recent newspaper article documented that one of the reasons for schools not having textbooks was " * * * twelve textbook companies refused to ship books because the District still owes for previous orders."

Prior negligence in these matters created a ripple effect that has a broad and negative reach. Vendors have been discouraged from responding to District of Columbia RFP's because of concerns over the selection process. Congress can assist in eliminating this perception without direct intervention. Congress can also assure all current and prospective private sector partners and their respective lenders that it will monitor and respond appropriately to any failing by the government of the District of Columbia to meet acceptable Government contracting practices.

"DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE, AND STATE, THE JUDICIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 1998"

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 13, 1997

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the census language in the Commerce, Justice, State appropriations bill H.R. 2267, because it would jeopardize a fair and accurate count of the U.S. population. In true Republican form, the majority has once again politicized an issue that is as straightforward as the science behind statistical sampling. In a self-serving and subtle racist effort to maintain control of Congress, some Republicans are hampering the Democratic effort to ensure that all Americans are counted in the Decennial Census.

H.R. 2267 would allow opponents of sampling to file lawsuits in Federal courts to block the use of sampling in the 2000 census. It also gives unprecedented power to the Speaker of the House to sue on behalf of the House to block sampling and to use resources of the House counsel or outside counsel to pursue such litigation. Finally, the bill is plagued with partisan language which states that statistical sampling "poses the risk of an inaccurate, invalid and unconstitutional census."

It is unfortunate and unconscionable that while we have the tools to obtain an accurate count in the 2000 census, some in Congress continue to object to the use of statistical sampling. We can use statistical sampling to transcend socioeconomic barriers that have historically restricted an accurate count. In the last census, almost four million Americans were not counted because of the antiquated counting method that was used. That means that 1.6 percent of our population was not counted. The current counting method relies on a door-to-door count of every person in the Nation. This method is neither the most efficient nor is it cost effective. The Census Bureau estimates that nearly five million Americans will not be counted in the 2000 census if the traditional methods are used.

Faced with past failures, it is only logical that we should use all of our existing resources to achieve a fair and accurate count. Scientists have concluded that it is close to impossible to physically count each and every person in the United States. Statistical sampling has been universally accepted by the scientific community as the best way to conduct the 2000 census. The Census Bureau would simply account for those residents it cannot count. Sampling is a scientific method endorsed by the American Statistical Society, the General Accounting Office, and the National Academy of Sciences.

In light of all of these facts, we must ask ourselves: Why does the Republican majority continue to oppose sampling? The answer lies in who the census undercounts when sampling is not employed. Studies have concluded that the undercount is not uniform across the population. Minorities, particularly in urban areas, are grossly undercounted by traditional methods. This leads me to conclude that race has become an underlying factor in the 2000 census debate and raises more questions about why statistical sampling has come under

attack by Republicans. The results from the census determine how Federal funds are allocated to the localities as well as how congressional seats are distributed among States. For instance, census data determines how certain public works funds are distributed, the creation of Federal empowerment zones, the establishment of fair market rent values, and the need for equal employment opportunities programs. Only through sampling can we ensure that States receive their fair share of Federal funds and programs. Since minorities have historically supported the Democratic Party, I believe that Republicans are positioning themselves to maintain power by depriving minorities of scarce Federal funds and representation in the Congress.

It is immoral and undemocratic for anyone to support a proposal that would deny the Census Bureau the vehicle to count each and every American. In a major and unprecedented move to mend the sad state of race relations, President Clinton has created an "Initiative on Race." It is rather ironic that Republicans are trying to turn back the clock by refusing to have a census that counts not just their supporters but every American. While we all know that American history is rampant with instances of prejudice and racism, it is unfortunate that this Commerce, Justice, State appropriations bill will add another pathetic chapter to that piece of history we are trying so hard to heal.

PRISONER OF WAR/MISSING IN
ACTION RECOGNITION DAY

HON. JOHN JOSEPH MOAKLEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 13, 1997

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to request unanimous consent to include the following proclamation in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

I have always been a strong supporter of efforts to help our POW/MIA's and their families.

The following is the text of the Massachusetts' proclamation declaring September 19, 1997, as Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Day:

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS—A
PROCLAMATION

(By His Excellency Governor Argeo Paul
Cellucci, 1997)

Whereas: In each of our country's wars, American prisoners of war have made tremendous sacrifices for our nation, enduring the burdens of loneliness, trauma, and hardship; and

Whereas: Prisoners of war have at times endured treatment at the hands of the enemy that is in violation of common human compassion, ethical standards, and international agreements; and

Whereas: In a time when we enjoy the blessings of peace, it is appropriate that all citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts recognize the special debt owed to those Americans held as prisoners of war; and

Whereas: It is also appropriate that we remember the unresolved casualties of war and those soldiers for whom we have not yet accounted; and

Whereas: Since the pain and bitterness of war endures for the families, relatives, and friends of those whose fates are unknown, we